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**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA**

STAR FABRICS, INC.,

Plaintiff,

v.

ROSS STORES, INC., et al.,

Defendant.

Case No. 2:23-cv-07405-SVW-PD
Hon. Stephen V. Wilson Presiding

STIPULATED PROTECTIVE
ORDER

(PD Version)

☐ Check if submitted without
material modifications to PD form

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSES AND LIMITATIONS

Discovery in this action is likely to involve production of confidential, proprietary, or private information for which special protection from public disclosure and from use for any purpose other than prosecuting this litigation may be warranted. Accordingly, the parties hereby stipulate to and petition the Court to enter the following Stipulated Protective Order. The parties acknowledge that this Order does not confer blanket protections on all disclosures or responses to discovery and that the protection it affords from public disclosure and use extends only to the limited information or items that are entitled to confidential treatment under the applicable legal principles. The parties further acknowledge, as set forth in Section 12.3, below, that this Stipulated Protective Order does not entitle them to file confidential information under seal; Civil Local Rule 79-5 sets forth the procedures that must be followed and the standards that will be applied when a party seeks permission from the court to file material under seal.

1.2 GOOD CAUSE STATEMENT

In light of the nature of the claims and allegations in this case and the parties' representations that discovery in this case will involve the production of confidential records, and in order to expedite the flow of information, to facilitate the prompt resolution of disputes over confidentiality of discovery materials, to adequately protect information the parties are entitled to keep confidential, to ensure that the parties are permitted reasonable necessary uses of such material in connection with this action, to address their handling of such material at the end of the litigation, and to serve the ends of justice, a protective order for such information is justified in this matter. The parties shall not designate any information/documents as confidential without a good faith belief that such information/documents have been maintained in a confidential, non-public manner, and that there is good cause or a compelling reason why it should not be part of the public record of this case.

2. DEFINITIONS

2.1 Action: This action 2:23-cv-07405-SVW-PD.

2.2 Challenging Party: a Party or Non-Party that challenges the designation of information or items under this Order.

2.3 “CONFIDENTIAL” Information or Items: information (regardless of how it is generated, stored or maintained) or tangible things that qualify for protection under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 26(c), and as specified above in the Good Cause Statement.

2.4 “HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL -- ATTORNEYS’ EYES ONLY” Information or Items: extremely sensitive “CONFIDENTIAL” Information or Items, the disclosure of which to another Party or Non-Party would create a substantial risk of serious harm that could not be avoided by less restrictive means.

2.5 Counsel: Outside Counsel of Record and House Counsel (as well as their support staff).

2.6 Designating Party: a Party or Non-Party that designates information or items that it produces in disclosures or in responses to discovery as “CONFIDENTIAL.”

2.7 Disclosure or Discovery Material: all items or information, regardless of the medium or manner in which it is generated, stored, or maintained (including, among other things, testimony, transcripts, and tangible things), that are produced or generated in disclosures or responses to discovery in this matter.

2.8 Expert: a person with specialized knowledge or experience in a matter pertinent to the litigation who has been retained by a Party or its counsel to serve as an expert witness or as a consultant in this Action.

2.9 House Counsel: attorneys who are employees of a party to this Action. House Counsel does not include Outside Counsel of Record or any other outside counsel.

2.10 Non-Party: any natural person, partnership, corporation, association, or other legal entity not named as a Party to this action.

2.11 Outside Counsel of Record: attorneys who are not employees of a party to this Action but are retained to represent or advise a party to this Action and have appeared in this Action on behalf of that party or are affiliated with a law firm which has appeared on behalf of that party, and includes support staff.

2.12 Party: any party to this Action, including all of its officers, directors, employees, consultants, retained experts, and Outside Counsel of Record (and their support staffs).

2.13 Producing Party: a Party or Non-Party that produces Disclosure or Discovery Material in this Action.

2.14 Professional Vendors: persons or entities that provide litigation support services (e.g., photocopying, videotaping, translating, preparing exhibits or demonstrations, and organizing, storing, or retrieving data in any form or medium) and their employees and subcontractors.

2.15 Protected Material: any Disclosure or Discovery Material that is designated as "CONFIDENTIAL" or "HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL -- ATTORNEYS' EYES ONLY."

2.16 Receiving Party: a Party that receives Disclosure or Discovery Material from a Producing Party.

3. SCOPE

The protections conferred by this Stipulation and Order cover not only Protected Material (as defined above), but also (1) any information copied or extracted from Protected Material; (2) all copies, excerpts, summaries, or compilations of Protected Material; and (3) any testimony, conversations, or presentations by Parties or their Counsel that might reveal Protected Material.

Any use of Protected Material at trial will be governed by the orders of the trial judge. This Order does not govern the use of Protected Material at trial.

1 4. DURATION

2 Even after final disposition of this litigation, the confidentiality obligations
3 imposed by this order shall remain in effect until a designating party agrees
4 otherwise in writing or a court order otherwise directs. Final disposition shall be
5 deemed to be the later of (1) dismissal of all claims and defenses in this action, with
6 or without prejudice; and (2) final judgment herein after the completion and
7 exhaustion of all appeals, rehearings, remands, trials, or reviews of this action,
8 including the time limits for filing any motions or applications for extension of time
9 pursuant to applicable law.

10 5. DESIGNATING PROTECTED MATERIAL

11 5.1 Exercise of Restraint and Care in Designating Material for Protection.

12 Each Party or Non-Party that designates information or items for protection under
13 this Order must take care to limit any such designation to specific material that
14 qualifies under the appropriate standards. The Designating Party must designate for
15 protection only those parts of material, documents, items, or oral or written
16 communications that qualify so that other portions of the material, documents,
17 items, or communications for which protection is not warranted are not swept
18 unjustifiably within the ambit of this Order.

19 Mass, indiscriminate, or routinized designations are prohibited. Designations
20 that are shown to be clearly unjustified or that have been made for an improper
21 purpose (e.g., to unnecessarily encumber the case development process or to impose
22 unnecessary expenses and burdens on other parties) may expose the Designating
23 Party to sanctions.

24 If it comes to a Designating Party's attention that information or items that it
25 designated for protection do not qualify for protection, that Designating Party must
26 promptly notify all other Parties that it is withdrawing the inapplicable designation.

27 5.2 Manner and Timing of Designations. Except as otherwise provided in
28 this Order (see, e.g., second paragraph of section 5.2(a) below), or as otherwise

1 stipulated or ordered, Disclosure or Discovery Material that qualifies for protection
2 under this Order must be clearly so designated before the material is disclosed or
3 produced.

4 Designation in conformity with this Order requires:

5 (a) for information in documentary form (e.g., paper or electronic documents,
6 but excluding transcripts of depositions), that the Producing Party affix at a
7 minimum, the legend “CONFIDENTIAL” or “HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL --
8 ATTORNEYS’ EYES ONLY” to each page that contains protected material. If
9 only a portion or portions of the material on a page qualifies for protection, the
10 Producing Party also must clearly identify the protected portion(s) (e.g., by making
11 appropriate markings in the margins).

12 A Party or Non-Party that makes original documents available for inspection
13 need not designate them for protection until after the inspecting Party has indicated
14 which documents it would like copied and produced. During the inspection and
15 before the designation, all of the material made available for inspection shall be
16 deemed “CONFIDENTIAL.” After the inspecting Party has identified the
17 documents it wants copied and produced, the Producing Party must determine which
18 documents, or portions thereof, qualify for protection under this Order. Then,
19 before producing the specified documents, the Producing Party must affix the
20 “CONFIDENTIAL”, or “HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL -- ATTORNEYS’ EYES
21 ONLY” legend to each page that contains Protected Material. If only a portion or
22 portions of the material on a page qualifies for protection, the Producing Party also
23 must clearly identify the protected portion(s) (e.g., by making appropriate markings
24 in the margins).

25 (b) for testimony given in depositions that the Designating Party identify the
26 Disclosure or Discovery Material on the record, before the close of the deposition all
27 protected testimony.
28

(c) for information produced in some form other than documentary and for any other tangible items, that the Producing Party affix in a prominent place on the exterior of the container or containers in which the information is stored the legend “CONFIDENTIAL” or “HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL -- ATTORNEYS’ EYES ONLY.” If only a portion or portions of the information warrants protection, the Producing Party, to the extent practicable, shall identify the protected portion(s).

5.3 Inadvertent Failures to Designate. If timely corrected, an inadvertent failure to designate qualified information or items does not, standing alone, waive the Designating Party’s right to secure protection under this Order for such material. Upon timely correction of a designation, the Receiving Party must make reasonable efforts to assure that the material is treated in accordance with the provisions of this Order.

6. CHALLENGING CONFIDENTIALITY DESIGNATIONS

6.1 Timing of Challenges. Any Party or Non-Party may challenge a designation of confidentiality at any time that is consistent with the Court’s Scheduling Order.

6.2 Meet and Confer. The Challenging Party will initiate the dispute resolution process (and, if necessary, file a discovery motion) under Local Rule 37.1 et seq.

6.3 The burden of persuasion in any such challenge proceeding will be on the Designating Party. Frivolous challenges, and those made for an improper purpose (e.g., to harass or impose unnecessary expenses and burdens on other parties) may expose the Challenging Party to sanctions. Unless the Designating Party has waived or withdrawn the confidentiality designation, all parties will continue to afford the material in question the level of protection to which it is entitled under the Producing Party’s designation until the Court rules on the challenge.

1 7. ACCESS TO AND USE OF PROTECTED MATERIAL

2 7.1 Basic Principles. A Receiving Party may use Protected Material that is
 3 disclosed or produced by another Party or by a Non-Party in connection with this
 4 Action only for prosecuting, defending, or attempting to settle this Action. Such
 5 Protected Material may be disclosed only to the categories of persons and under the
 6 conditions described in this Order. When the Action has been terminated, a
 7 Receiving Party must comply with the provisions of section 13 below (FINAL
 8 DISPOSITION).

9 Protected Material must be stored and maintained by a Receiving Party at a
 10 location and in a secure manner that ensures that access is limited to the persons
 11 authorized under this Order.

12 7.2 Disclosure of “CONFIDENTIAL” Information or Items. Unless
 13 otherwise ordered by the court or permitted in writing by the Designating Party, a
 14 Receiving Party may disclose any information or item designated
 15 “CONFIDENTIAL” only to:

16 (a) the Receiving Party’s Outside Counsel of Record in this Action, as
 17 well as employees of said Outside Counsel of Record to whom it is reasonably
 18 necessary to disclose the information for this Action;

19 (b) the officers, directors, and employees (including House Counsel) of
 20 the Receiving Party to whom disclosure is reasonably necessary for this Action;

21 (c) Experts (as defined in this Order) of the Receiving Party to whom
 22 disclosure is reasonably necessary for this Action and who have signed the
 23 “Acknowledgment and Agreement to Be Bound” (Exhibit A);

24 (d) the Court and its personnel;

25 (e) court reporters and their staff;

26 (f) professional jury or trial consultants, mock jurors, and Professional
 27 Vendors to whom disclosure is reasonably necessary for this Action and who have
 28 signed the “Acknowledgment and Agreement to Be Bound” (Exhibit A);

(g) the author or recipient of a document containing the information or a custodian or other person who otherwise possessed or knew the information;

(h) during their depositions, witnesses, and attorneys for witnesses, in the Action to whom disclosure is reasonably necessary provided: (1) the deposing party requests that the witness sign the form attached as Exhibit A hereto; and (2) they will not be permitted to keep any confidential information unless they sign the “Acknowledgment and Agreement to Be Bound” (Exhibit A), unless otherwise agreed by the Designating Party or ordered by the court. Pages of transcribed deposition testimony or exhibits to depositions that reveal Protected Material may be separately bound by the court reporter and may not be disclosed to anyone except as permitted under this Stipulated Protective Order; and

(i) any mediator or settlement officer, and their supporting personnel, mutually agreed upon by any of the parties engaged in settlement discussions.

7.3 Disclosure of “HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL -- ATTORNEYS’ EYES ONLY” Information or Items. Unless otherwise ordered by the court or permitted in writing by the Designating Party, a Receiving Party may disclose any information or item designated “HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL” only to:

(a) the Receiving Party’s Outside Counsel of Record in this Action, as well as employees of said Outside Counsel of Record to whom it is reasonably necessary to disclose the information for this Action;

(b) Experts (as defined in this Order) of the Receiving Party to whom disclosure is reasonably necessary for this Action and who have signed the “Acknowledgment and Agreement to Be Bound” (Exhibit A);

(c) the court and its personnel;

(d) private court reporters and their staff to whom disclosure is reasonably necessary for this Action and who have signed the “Acknowledgment and Agreement to Be Bound” (Exhibit A);

(e) professional jury or trial consultants, mock jurors, and Professional Vendors to whom disclosure is reasonably necessary for this Action and who have signed the “Acknowledgment and Agreement to Be Bound” (Exhibit A);

(f) the author or recipient of a document containing the information or a custodian or other person who otherwise possessed or knew the information; and

(g) any mediator or settlement officer, and their supporting personnel, mutually agreed upon by any of the parties engaged in settlement discussions.

8. PROTECTED MATERIAL SUBPOENAED OR ORDERED PRODUCED IN OTHER LITIGATION

If a Party is served with a subpoena or a court order issued in other litigation that compels disclosure of any information or items designated in this Action as “CONFIDENTIAL” or “HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL -- ATTORNEYS’ EYES ONLY,” that Party must:

(a) promptly notify in writing the Designating Party. Such notification will include a copy of the subpoena or court order;

(b) promptly notify in writing the party who caused the subpoena or order to issue in the other litigation that some or all of the material covered by the subpoena or order is subject to this Protective Order. Such notification will include a copy of this Stipulated Protective Order; and

(c) cooperate with respect to all reasonable procedures sought to be pursued by the Designating Party whose Protected Material may be affected.

If the Designating Party timely seeks a protective order, the Party served with the subpoena or court order shall not produce any information designated in this action as “CONFIDENTIAL” or “HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL -- ATTORNEYS’ EYES ONLY” before a determination by the court from which the subpoena or order issued, unless the Party has obtained the Designating Party’s permission, or unless otherwise required by the law or court order. The Designating Party shall bear the burden and expense of seeking protection in that court of its confidential

1 material and nothing in these provisions should be construed as authorizing or
2 encouraging a Receiving Party in this Action to disobey a lawful directive from
3 another court.

4 9. A NON-PARTY'S PROTECTED MATERIAL SOUGHT TO BE
5 PRODUCED IN THIS LITIGATION

6 (a) The terms of this Order are applicable to information produced by a
7 Non-Party in this Action and designated as "CONFIDENTIAL" or "HIGHLY
8 CONFIDENTIAL -- ATTORNEYS' EYES ONLY." Such information produced by
9 Non-Parties in connection with this litigation is protected by the remedies and relief
10 provided by this Order. Nothing in these provisions should be construed as
11 prohibiting a Non-Party from seeking additional protections..

12 (b) In the event that a Party is required, by a valid discovery request, to
13 produce a Non-Party's confidential information in its possession, and the Party is
14 subject to an agreement with the Non-Party not to produce the Non-Party's
15 confidential information, then the Party will:

16 (1) promptly notify in writing the Requesting Party and the Non-Party
17 that some or all of the information requested is subject to a confidentiality
18 agreement with a Non-Party;

19 (2) promptly provide the Non-Party with a copy of the Stipulated
20 Protective Order in this Action, the relevant discovery request(s), and a reasonably
21 specific description of the information requested; and

22 (3) make the information requested available for inspection by the
23 Non-Party, if requested.

24 (c) If the Non-Party fails to seek a protective order from this court within
25 14 days of receiving the notice and accompanying information, the Receiving Party
26 may produce the Non-Party's confidential information responsive to the discovery
27 request. If the Non-Party timely seeks a protective order, the Receiving Party will
28 not produce any information in its possession or control that is subject to the

1 confidentiality agreement with the Non-Party before a determination by the court.
2 Absent a court order to the contrary, the Non-Party will bear the burden and expense
3 of seeking protection in this court of its Protected Material.

4 10. UNAUTHORIZED DISCLOSURE OF PROTECTED MATERIAL

5 If a Receiving Party learns that, by inadvertence or otherwise, it has disclosed
6 Protected Material to any person or in any circumstance not authorized under this
7 Stipulated Protective Order, the Receiving Party must immediately (a) notify in
8 writing the Designating Party of the unauthorized disclosures, (b) use its best efforts
9 to retrieve all unauthorized copies of the Protected Material, (c) inform the person or
10 persons to whom unauthorized disclosures were made of all the terms of this Order,
11 and (d) request such person or persons to execute the “Acknowledgment and
12 Agreement to Be Bound” that is attached hereto as Exhibit A.

13 11. INADVERTENT PRODUCTION OF PRIVILEGED OR OTHERWISE
14 PROTECTED MATERIAL

15 When a Producing Party gives notice to Receiving Parties that certain
16 inadvertently produced material is subject to a claim of privilege or other protection,
17 the obligations of the Receiving Parties are those set forth in Federal Rule of Civil
18 Procedure 26(b)(5)(B). This provision is not intended to modify whatever
19 procedure may be established in an e-discovery order that provides for production
20 without prior privilege review. Pursuant to Federal Rule of Evidence 502(d) and
21 (e), insofar as the parties reach an agreement on the effect of disclosure of a
22 communication or information covered by the attorney-client privilege or work
23 product protection, the parties may incorporate their agreement in the stipulated
24 protective order submitted to the court.

25 12. MISCELLANEOUS

26 12.1 Right to Further Relief. Nothing in this Order abridges the right of any
27 person to seek its modification by the Court in the future.
28

1 12.2 Right to Assert Other Objections. By stipulating to the entry of this
 2 Protective Order no Party waives any right it otherwise would have to object to
 3 disclosing or producing any information or item on any ground not addressed in this
 4 Stipulated Protective Order. Similarly, no Party waives any right to object on any
 5 ground to use in evidence of any of the material covered by this Protective Order.

6 12.3 Filing Protected Material. A Party that seeks to file under seal any
 7 Protected Material must comply with Civil Local Rule 79-5. Protected Material may
 8 only be filed under seal pursuant to a court order authorizing the sealing of the
 9 specific Protected Material at issue. If a Party's request to file Protected Material
 10 under seal is denied by the court, then the Receiving Party may file the information
 11 in the public record unless otherwise instructed by the court.

12 13. FINAL DISPOSITION

13 After the final disposition of this Action, as defined in paragraph 4, within 60
 14 days of a written request by the Designating Party, each Receiving Party must return
 15 all Protected Material to the Producing Party or destroy such material. As used in
 16 this subdivision, "all Protected Material" includes all copies, abstracts, compilations,
 17 summaries, and any other format reproducing or capturing any of the Protected
 18 Material. Whether the Protected Material is returned or destroyed, the Receiving
 19 Party must submit a written certification to the Producing Party (and, if not the same
 20 person or entity, to the Designating Party) by the 60 day deadline that (1) identifies
 21 (by category, where appropriate) all the Protected Material that was returned or
 22 destroyed and (2) affirms that the Receiving Party has not retained any copies,
 23 abstracts, compilations, summaries or any other format reproducing or capturing any
 24 of the Protected Material. Notwithstanding this provision, Counsel are entitled to
 25 retain an archival copy of all pleadings, motion papers, trial, deposition, and hearing
 26 transcripts, legal memoranda, correspondence, deposition and trial exhibits, expert
 27 reports, attorney work product, and consultant and expert work product, even if such
 28 materials contain Protected Material. Any such archival copies that contain or

1 constitute Protected Material remain subject to this Protective Order as set forth in
2 Section 4 (DURATION).

3 14. VIOLATION

4 Any willful violation of this Order may be punished by civil or criminal
5 contempt proceedings, financial or evidentiary sanctions, reference to disciplinary
6 authorities, or other appropriate action at the discretion of the Court.

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8 IT IS SO STIPULATED, THROUGH COUNSEL OF RECORD.

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10 Dated: March 6, 2024

By: /s/ Stephen M. Doniger
Stephen M. Doniger, Esq.
Kelsey M. Schultz, Esq.
DONIGER /BURROUGHS
Attorneys for Plaintiff

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13 Dated: March 6, 2024

By: /s/ Kalpana Nagampalli
Kalpana Nagampalli (*Pro Hac Vice*)
Ryan R. Gordon, Esq.
Attorneys for Defendants

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17 FOR GOOD CAUSE SHOWN, IT IS SO ORDERED.

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20 DATED: March 06, 2024



21 HON. PATRICIA DONAHUE
22 United States Magistrate Judge
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EXHIBIT AACKNOWLEDGMENT AND AGREEMENT TO BE BOUND

I, _____ **[full name]**, of _____ **[full address]**, declare under penalty of perjury that I have read in its entirety and understand the Stipulated Protective Order that was issued by the United States District Court for the Central District of California on [date] in the case of *Star Fabrics, Inc. v. Ross Stores, Inc. et al*; Case No. 2:23-cv-07405-SVW-PD. I agree to comply with and to be bound by all the terms of this Stipulated Protective Order and I understand and acknowledge that failure to so comply could expose me to sanctions and punishment in the nature of contempt. I solemnly promise that I will not disclose in any manner any information or item that is subject to this Stipulated Protective Order to any person or entity except in strict compliance with the provisions of this Order.

I further agree to submit to the jurisdiction of the United States District Court for the Central District of California for the purpose of enforcing the terms of this Stipulated Protective Order, even if such enforcement proceedings occur after termination of this action. I hereby appoint _____ **[full name]** of _____ **[full address and telephone number]** as my California agent for service of process in connection with this action or any proceedings related to enforcement of this Stipulated Protective Order.

Date: _____

City and State where signed: _____

Printed name: _____

Signature: _____